



**From The Desk of V Corps Equal Opportunity Sgt. Maj. Evy Lacy**

### **Asian/Pacific Heritage Month**

“Liberty and Freedom For All” is the theme for this year’s observance of Asian/Pacific Heritage Month. Asian/Pacific Heritage Week was first observed in May 1979. Historically, May was selected because Japanese immigrants first arrived in the United States on May 7, 1843,

and the transcontinental railroad was completed on May 10, 1969, recognizing the efforts of Chinese workers who laid the tracks that joined the east and west coasts. In May 1990, President George H. Bush expanded the initial weeklong celebration to an entire month.

Asian Pacific Americans have made significant contributions to our nation. The following is a list of Asian Pacific American “firsts”:

#### **Arts:**

**1957, 1963** Chinese American James Wong Howe – first Asian American to win two Academy Awards in cinematography.

**1978 – 1981** Japanese American Toshiko Akiyoshi – first woman in jazz history to be awarded the Best Arranger and Best Big Jazz Band by Down Beat Reader’s Poll; received award for four consecutive years.

**1994** Korean American comedian Margaret Cho – first Asian American to star in her own television show, *All American Girl*, a sitcom about a Korean American family.

#### **Government:**

**1962** Chinese American Wing Luke – First Filipino to serve in the United States legislature (Hawaii state senate).

**1987** South Asian American Joy Cherian – First Asian American appointed to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

**1990** Daniel K. Akaka – First native Hawaiian to serve the U.S. Congress; 1993. Worked to get congressional joint resolution that formally apologized to Hawaiians for the 1893 overthrow of the islands' native government.

### **Education:**

**1990** Chinese American Chang-Lin Tien -- First Asian American to head a major university when named chancellor of the University of California, Berkeley.

**2000** Japanese American Aki Kurose – First Asian American woman to have a Seattle public school, Washington State, named in her honor.

### **Military:**

**1942** U.S. War Department authorizes the first Filipino infantry battalion; its ranks were filled by Filipino Americans.

**1998** Japanese American General Eric K. Shinseki assumes duties as the 28<sup>th</sup> Vice Chief of Staff, making him the highest-ranking Asian in the U.S. armed forces to date.

### **Science:**

**1985** Japanese American and astronaut Ellison Onizuka – First Asian American in space.

**1993** South Asian American Arati Prabhakar – First Asian American director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology when appointed by President Bill Clinton.

Asian Americans comprise approximately 5 percent of the total U. S. population, and are continuing to make outstanding contributions to the military and society.

Please join the Heidelberg community in a celebration of Asian Pacific Month on May 21 at the Heidelberg Shopping Center.

If you'd like more information on ethnic and special observances or other EO topics, call me or V Corps EO Program Manager Maj. Jon Sirmon at 370-5763 or 370-5768.